

to come to an agreement that every Senator will agree to, but I think we are close enough on that issue that we ought to be able to reach agreement and bring the foreign operations appropriations conference report to a conclusion. And if we can get that agreement and fast track, we will have completed the year on a very high note and one that the American people, I think, will be proud of and of which we could be proud.

The taxpayers of the United States have had a pretty good year. We would like to end up with agreements on these important issues. Certainly, it won't be perfect, as the Senator has said, but we have tried compromise after compromise after compromise. So far, none of them have taken hold. But I have faith that on Sunday, we will find a way to do that. Certainly, I do think that senior Members and leaders have to step up to these challenges and get the job done.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there be a period for the transaction of morning business until the hour of 1:30 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BROWNBACK). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LOTT. I yield the floor.

Mr. LEAHY addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

THANKING THE SENATE STAFF

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I will be very brief because I see other Senators waiting to take the floor. I will note a couple of things. The distinguished majority leader has mentioned that it is Sunday. The guest Chaplain today, Father Paul Lavin of St. Joseph's Church, is my pastor when I am away from my home in Vermont, which is not often on a Sunday.

But this Sunday is extraordinary, that is, being in Washington and not in Vermont.

Father Lavin also prayed for, in the mass this morning which my wife and I attended, the Congress and the Government, and so forth, as we all do.

Sometimes we have to be careful we don't get too much of what we pray for, but I think it would probably be safe to say, as I look around at the staff and everybody else here, that they were probably praying that it would come to a conclusion.

In that respect, I note, Mr. President, as I have in other years, that while I may joke about Senators being nothing but constitutional impediments to the staff, the fact is, the U.S. Senate, the greatest parliamentary body in the world, could not exist without the extraordinarily talented men and women who work on Capitol Hill for Members on both sides of the aisle, for commit-

tees, for the Senate itself, and those who take the notes of our proceedings, to those who keep the procedures of the Senate moving.

I say a special compliment to the young men and women who come here and serve as pages, come from all over the country and serve here as pages. I have been fortunate to have had a series of some of the most exemplary young men and women from Vermont who have served here as pages. They go through a rigorous screening process. Only the best get picked. And they go back to be the best among our citizens in our own State.

The people in this country oftentimes do not realize the extraordinary dedication of the men and women who work here who sometimes put in literally around-the-clock hours and days, who literally give of themselves more than any private industry could ever expect of anyone. And that is what makes the Senate work.

My friend from Mississippi and I were discussing earlier putting together this last-minute legislation. Well, we can make some policy decisions, but it is these people who have to then pull it together. For Foreign operations, Tim Rieser, from my staff, carries out my duties as ranking member on that. There are dozens of others on both sides that have to do this—Robin Cleveland for Senator MCCONNELL, who is the chairman of that subcommittee.

And it is the same with all the subcommittees, trying to pull these pieces together and actually have the paper. We stand up and say "aye" or "nay," but they have to have the papers on the floor in perfect condition for us to vote on them.

Then, whether it is the people in the Cloakroom, the people back at our offices, or anybody else, they also give up their family time to be here for the good of the country.

FOREIGN AID

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I hope we can complete these foreign aid bills. I would also say to my friend from Mississippi, he mentioned whether we should use taxpayers' money for abortion in the foreign aid bill. There is a specific prohibition against any U.S. dollars being used for abortions abroad in the foreign aid bill.

In fact, as Senator Mark Hatfield, former chairman of the Appropriation Committee, and I pointed out on the floor earlier—he was very much a right-to-life, antiabortion Senator, consistent in that—pointed out that the family planning moneys that have gone in the foreign aid bill have dramatically decreased the number of abortions in those areas where they were used.

An example was Russia where abortion was used as a form of birth control, where we gave them family planning money and the number of abortions dropped dramatically.

So I hope that we will continue to do that and realize, while family planning

is something available to most people in the United States, in a lot of other countries it is not available because of costs, because of techniques, because of training, for whatever reason. Unfortunately, in those countries oftentimes abortions are a means of family planning. So I hope that those who are against abortion would realize family planning money can help us prevent that.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. LEAHY. Then lastly, Mr. President—I will probably speak on this again this afternoon. If we go out, it means there will not be a chance to confirm a number of judges who are pending, who have been pending for a considerable period of time; one in particular, who has been voted out of our committee twice, once last year and again this year, Margaret Morrow, one of the most qualified people, man or woman, ever to be nominated to be a district court judge.

We also have what I think is the shocking situation of Bill Lann Lee, who has been subjected to some of the most scurrilous charges—charges, unfortunately, repeated even by Members of the Senate. The charges have been refuted, but need to be refuted in a hearing. We have asked for a further hearing on Bill Lann Lee just so those charges can be refuted. We have been told that we cannot have that hearing.

I renew the request. We should have it.

We talk about civil rights in this country. The civil rights of this country are determined by having strong laws and strong people to enforce those laws. I do not believe in the better natures of our souls as Americans that all of us would support the civil rights of all others simply in a vacuum. Many of us would; others do need the requirement of a law to do that.

I would like to think that I am a person who would never break into an unlocked, unguarded warehouse in the middle of the night to steal things. But we have laws and locks to prevent others who may not feel as strongly motivated to obey the commandment: "Thou shalt not steal."

By the same token, we set up laws that say: "You shall not discriminate. You shall protect the civil rights of all Americans." Those laws need to be enforced. We do not have a chief enforcer now. The President has nominated Bill Lann Lee, a most qualified person for that position.

Unfortunately, the debate on this fine nominee took a decidedly partisan turn when the Speaker of the House chose to intervene in this matter and urge the Senate Republican leader to kill this nomination. He waited until after the confirmation hearing to raise and mischaracterize a case about which no member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Republican or Democrat, had asked a single question. Indeed, apparently unaware of the decision of his